

2006 – Continuing to Serve the Community

The Mt. Vernon-Black Township Parks and Recreation Department continued providing a variety of recreational programs for Mt. Vernon. The Department personnel consisted of Director – John Tate, Recreation Manager – Nick Hargett (through May) Adam Jines (hired in September), Pool/Community Center Director – Ruth Fulwider, Maintenance Supervisor – Darin Toler and Administrative Assistant – Debra Scott. The department also employed several part-time and seasonal employees throughout the year.

The Parks Director reported to the Parks Board every third Wednesday of each month. The agenda for these meetings consisted of old business from previous meetings and any new business or issues to be addressed. The 2006 Parks Board Members were Ron Bennett (President), Steve Buchanan (moved away in August), Kay Cox, John Robb and Synda Waters.

The department continued to maintain five public parks in Mt. Vernon. The parks are Brittlebank Park, Fairview Park, Kimball Park, Kiwanis Park and Sherburne Park. The department also maintained the Community Center and Parks Office, Brittlebank Pool and Kiwanis Senior Citizen Center.

Highlights from 2006:

The year of 2006 was a good year for the Parks and Recreation Department. We continued to make improvements to our facilities and started some new endeavors for the future. We said goodbye to a staff member and welcomed a new member to our staff.

During the first part of the year, we finished up another improvement project for the department. Capital Electric, Inc. was hired by the department to install new lighting in the Community Center. After a few electrical and installation issues, the lights were completed and are working well. The new lights have given the center a new look and are providing more adequate lighting. In years to come, we look to install a new railing system around the skating rink. The Community Center/Skating Rink continues to be popular spot for many youth after school and on Saturdays. The Community Center also hosted over 40 private skating parties for the year. Another successful season of floor hockey saw 25 kids participate over the winter months. Ruth and her staff hosted the annual Pumpkin Festival and Christmas Party. Both of these events provided the community a good time and were received well by everyone who attended.

With help from Mayor Knowles and the City, the Parks Department was able to make a much needed improvement at Brittlebank Park. For the first time, the parking lot

at Brittlebank Pool was paved. In the past it had been a gravel lot. We were also able to secure funds to pave the roads leading to the parking lot. With all of the access roads at Brittlebank Park in need of improvements, we have created a new budget line for 2007 specifically for paving. We should have the area from Shelter #1 to Shelter #3 paved in the Spring of 2007. By 2009, all the roads at Brittlebank Park will be paved.

The summer of 2006 was a busy one at Brittlebank Pool. The total revenue was up 14% from the previous year, the areas that contributed the most to this increase were regular admissions and swim lessons. We saw an increase of over 80 swim lessons in 2006. Brittlebank Pool continues to be a popular spot over the summers. We look to continue making improvements that will sustain the pool for many years to come. The Brittlebank Barracudas swim team had another successful season and provided the opportunity for many kids to be involved in a team setting. As we look to the future, we look forward to providing a safe and enjoyable experience at Brittlebank Pool for the residents of Mt. Vernon.

In 2006 we looked for new ways to provide recreational opportunities and increase the awareness of outdoor recreation. The department worked with Mr. Denny Hargett and came up with an Outdoor Adventure Program. This program consisted of a week long experience of camping, boating, fishing and other outdoor education. As a trial program, we opened the program to Junior High age students at no cost to them. We worked with other organizations and received donations for transportation, food and other supplies. There were 10 Junior High age boys that participated in the program. The program was a success and we look to add more programs similar to this in the coming years.

Taking a look at the area of youth and adult sports, we saw a few changes in 2006. In the spring, the department introduced a new Junior Kickers soccer program. This program basically provided an opportunity for children ages 4-5 to be introduced to the game of soccer. The program started a little rough, but by the second week the program went smoothly. There were 50 kids that participated in the program. We continued to offer the same programs from past years and our numbers overall were similar to 2005. Over the winter months the department again worked with St. Matthews School to host the church volleyball league. A break down of each program is attached at the end of this report. We look to start a few new programs and bring a few back in 2007. These programs consist of sand volleyball, kickball and adult tennis leagues. In May, Nick Hargett was married and moved to Bloomington. The department hired an intern for the summer and in September Adam Jines was hired as the new Recreation Manager.

2007 – Progress for the Future

As the year 2007 begins, we will continue to offer the programs of the past and hope to start up some new programs during the year. We look to broaden our recreational scope and provide more diverse programs. We will continue to provide safe and clean parks and seek out ways to improve our facilities. The City of Mt. Vernon is working towards some great new things for our residents and the Parks Department looks forward to being a part of this vision for the future. It is our pleasure to serve the community and we look forward to 2007.

Respectfully,

John D. Tate
Parks Director